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Before The  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554

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In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Amendment of Section 2.106	)	ET Docket 95-18
of the Commission's Rules to	)	RM-7927
Allocate Spectrum at 2 GHz for	)	PP-28
Use by the Mobile-Satellite Service	)	

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JUN 23 1997

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

**To: The Commission**

West Central Illinois Educational Telecommunications Corporation (also known as "CONVOCOM") submits these Comments in response to the *Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* in ET Docket No. 95-18, relating to the costs of relocating BAS incumbents into the new BAS band. CONVOCOM is noncommercial educational broadcaster and a heavy user of 2 GHz spectrum in West Central Illinois and surrounding areas. Thus, CONVOCOM has a vital interest in ensuring that the relocation costs of its 2 GHz microwave facilities are covered.

**BACKGROUND**

CONVOCOM is a regional educational telecommunications consortium consisting of colleges and universities, businesses and industries, public telecommunications organizations, public school districts and health care organizations. It was chartered in 1976 at the recommendation of the Illinois Board of Higher Education as an Illinois 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation with the mission to engage in and encourage educational telecommunications in support of interinstitutional resource sharing. CONVOCOM is the licensee of viewer-supported public television stations WMEC(TV), Macomb, Illinois, WQEC(TV), Quincy, and WSEC(TV), Jacksonville, Illinois. CONVOCOM's noncommercial TV stations (as well as its headquarters

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in Springfield and network operations center in Peoria) are connected by an extensive microwave network that was funded, in large part, by the federal government through the Public Telecommunication Facilities Program of NTIA. By operating in this manner, CONVOCOM offers high quality programming to approximately 450,000 people throughout the State of Illinois in a manner consistent with its fiscal realities.

### **COMMENTS**

CONVOCOM is the licensee of approximately forty (40) BAS facilities that link its sites. See map attached as Exhibit A. As shown in Exhibit B, at least twenty-one (21) of CONVOCOM's 40 microwave stations are BAS incumbents affected by the relocation and rechannelization approach.

CONVOCOM supports and applauds the Commission's proposal to accomplish relocation of BAS incumbents in accordance with its Emerging Technologies policies. CONVOCOM further supports the portion of the Emerging Technologies approach which requires the new users of the spectrum (the mobile-satellite users) to bear all costs associated with the BAS relocations.

CONVOCOM estimates that relocation costs for its extensive microwave system could run into the tens (or hundreds) of thousands of dollars, depending on whether digital BAS equipment is used and whether shorter path lengths and additional towers will be needed to cover the same microwave hops. CONVOCOM is a noncommercial educational licensee facing tight funding and enormous costs for digital television conversions. Moreover, CONVOCOM has suffered a severe reduction in funds provided by the Federal and state governments. Furthermore, changes in the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) grant

funding for multiple station licensees and the reduction in appropriations for federal grant money from the PTFP program of NTIA mean that CONVOCOM cannot reasonably provide either the capital investment or the personnel costs needed to rechannelize and relocate its 2 GHz frequencies.

Therefore, CONVOCOM is concerned about the Commission's inquiry as to whether the value and age of the BAS equipment should be taken into account in deciding appropriate costs in the case of involuntary relocation. Many of CONVOCOM's BAS licenses are for older facilities that are used frequently (even daily). At the time CONVOCOM applied for and received authority for these older 2 GHz microwave paths, there was no notion of 2 GHz spectrum allocation for mobile-satellite purposes. CONVOCOM is ill-equipped to fund costly new equipment needed for the rechannelized facilities. It would be inequitable for CONVOCOM, as the incumbent BAS licensee, to be forced to absorb any costs for relocating and rechannelizing those old facilities simply because CONVOCOM has carefully maintained its aging equipment and carefully stewarded its fiscal resources.

Similarly, CONVOCOM believes that there should be no "sunset" date after which BAS licensees who have not been relocated should be required to vacate the spectrum without compensation. CONVOCOM believes that the new users of the spectrum should be required to compensate the old users, regardless of the relocation date. To hold otherwise would result in a windfall for the new users. CONVOCOM (and the federal government through the PTFP) invested in the 2 GHz band for its microwave facilities long before the mobile-satellite service came along. Many of CONVOCOM's BAS facilities are in rural areas that MSS operators might not seek to serve initially, but eventually develop as demand for the new service grows. If

CONVOCOM must relocate its BAS facilities for the newcomers, it is only proper that the newcomers bear those costs.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, CONVOCOM urges the FCC to require the new users of the 2 GHz spectrum to fully compensate the incumbent BAS licensee for all costs associated with the relocation and rechannelization of BAS facilities.

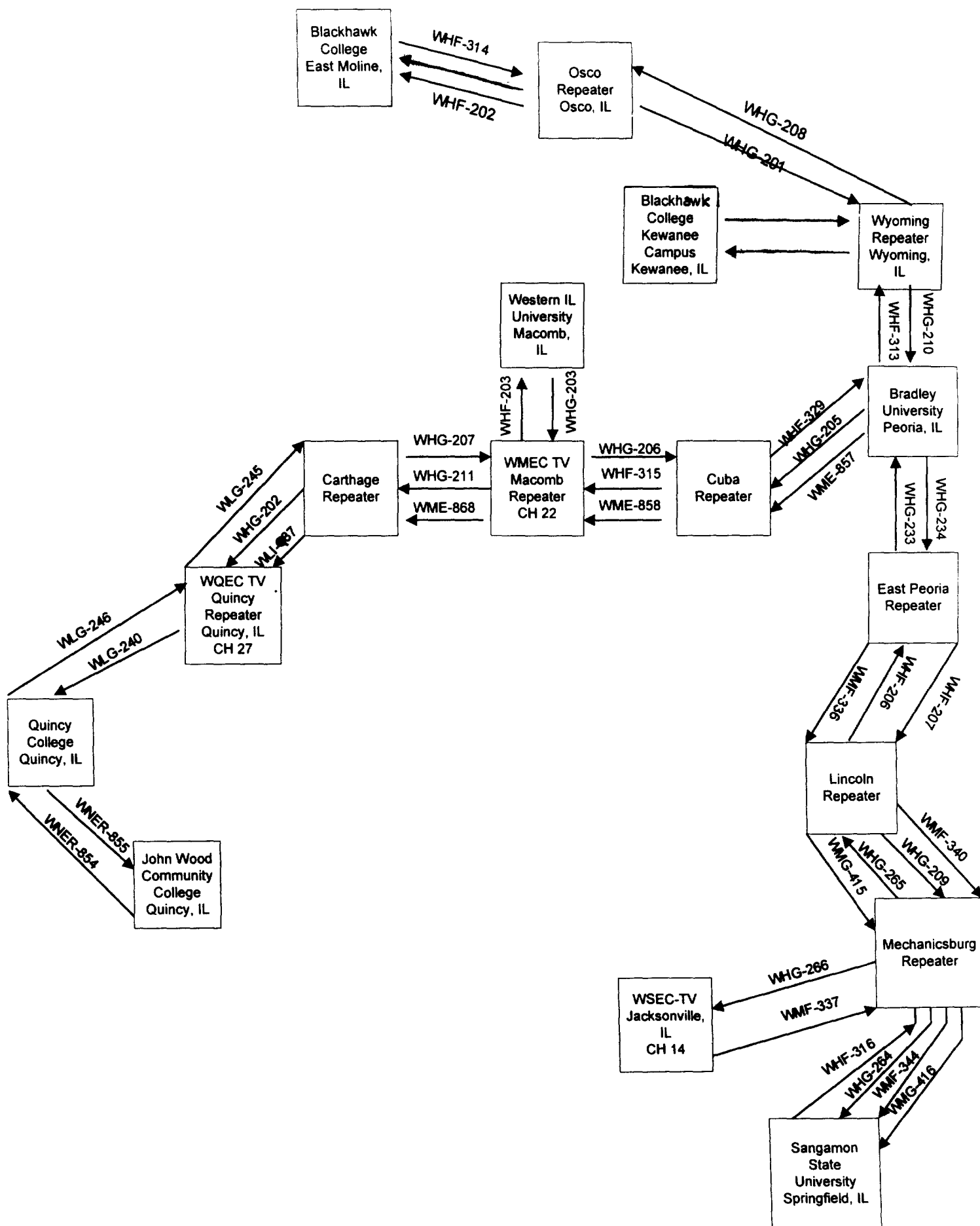
Respectfully submitted,

**WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS EDUCATIONAL  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS CORP.**

By: Torold Gruebel / M/M

June 23, 1997

## **EXHIBIT A**



## **EXHIBIT B**

**CONVOCOM BAS INCUMBENT  
FACILITIES REQUIRING RELOCATION**

<b>1990-2100</b>	<b>2025-2130</b>
WHG-207, Carthage, IL (1990-2008)	WHF-203, Colchester, IL (2025-2042)
WLG-240, Quincy (1900-2008)	WHG-203, Macomb, IL (2093-2110)
WHG-208, Wyoming (1990-2008)	WHG-211, Colchester, IL (2093-2110)
WHG-265, Mechanicsburg (1990-2008)	WME-868, Colchester, IL (2059-2076)
WHG-233, East Peoria (1990-2008)	WHF-314, Rock Island (2028-2025)
	WHG-201, Cambridge (2059-2076)
	WHG-266, Mechanicsburg (2042-2059)
	WMF-340, Lincoln (2025-2042)
	WMU-941, Quincy (2025-2042)
	WPJE-682, Jacksonville (2008-2025)
	WLG-246, Quincy (2076-2093)
	WHF-202, Cambridge (2076-2093)
	WHF-206, Lincoln (2059-2076)
	WHF-207, East Peoria (2008-2025)
	WHG-209, Lincoln (2076-2093)
	WHA-871, Peoria (2076-2093)